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whilst the enraged snake darted his head in all directions, but in vain: thus suspended, he has not the power to round himself so as to seize hold of his tormentor. He exhausted himself in vain exertions, when the snake catcher descended the bank, dropped him into the empty basket, and closed the lid: he then began to play, and after a short time raised the lid of the basket, when the snake darted about wildly, and attempted to escape; the lid was shut down again quickly, the music always playing. This was repeated two or three times; and in a very short interval, the lid being raised, the snake sat on his tail, opened his hood, and danced quite as quietly as the tame snakes in the other basket, nor did he again attempt to escape. This, having witnessed it with my own eyes, I can assert as a fact."

I particularly request the attention of my readers to the foregoing account, as, from the circumstance of its having been furnished by an eye-witness, and a man whose public station and known character were sufficient to command belief in his veracity, it will prove serviceable to me by and bye, when I shall endeavour to disprove the ridiculous assertions of Abbé Dubois* and others, who hold that serpent-charming is a mere imposition, and assert, certainly without a shade of warranty for so doing, that the serpents are in these cases always previously tamed, and deprived of their poison bags and fangs, when they are let loose in certain situations for the purpose of being artfully caught again, and represented as *wild* snakes, subdued by the charms of their pipe. I shall, however, say no more at present of Dubois, Denon, or others who are sceptical on this subject, but shall leave the refutation of their fanciful opinions to another opportunity—my present purpose being the establishment of *facts*, ere I venture to advance a theory.

I shall therefore conclude my present paper, and in my next, besides adducing many other important facts relative to serpent-charming, shall endeavour to throw some light upon the real mode by which it is effected. H. D. R.

* Description of the People of India, p. 469.

GRUMBLING.

If it be no part of the English constitution, it is certainly part of the constitution of Englishmen to grumble. They cannot help it, even if they tried; not that they ever do try, quite the reverse, but they could not help grumbling if they tried ever so much. A true-born Englishman is born grumbling. He grumbles at the light, because it dazzles his eyes, and he grumbles at the darkness, because it takes away the light. He grumbles when he is hungry, because he wants to eat; he grumbles when he is full, because he can eat no more. He grumbles at the winter, because it is cold; he grumbles at the summer, because it is hot; and he grumbles at spring and autumn, because they are neither hot nor cold. He grumbles at the past, because it is gone; he grumbles at the future, because it is not come; and he grumbles at the present, because it is neither the past nor the future. He grumbles at law, because it restrains him; and he grumbles at liberty, because it does not restrain others. He grumbles at all the elements—fire, water, earth, and air. He grumbles at fire, because it is so dear; at water, because it is so foul; at the earth, in all its combinations of mud, dust, bricks, and sand; and at the air, in all its conditions of hot or cold, wet or dry. All the world seems as if it were made for nothing else than to plague Englishmen, and set them a-grumbling. The Englishman must grumble at nature for its rudeness, and at art for its innovation; at what is old, because he is tired of it; and at what is new, because he is not used to it. He grumbles at everything that is to be grumbled at; and when there is nothing to grumble at, he grumbles at that. Grumbling cleaves to him in all the departments of life; when he is well, he grumbles at the cook; and when he is ill, he grumbles at the doctor and nurse. He grumbles in his amusements, and he grumbles in his devotion; at the theatres he grumbles at the players, and at church he grumbles at the parson. He cannot for the life of him enjoy a day's pleasure without grumbling. He grumbles at his enemies, and he grumbles at his friends. He grumbles at all the animal creation, at horses when he rides on them, at dogs when he shoots with them, at birds when he misses them, at pigs when they squeak, at asses when they bray, at geese when they cackle, and at peacocks when they scream. He is always on the look-out for something to grumble at; he reads the newspapers, that he may grumble at public affairs; his eyes are always open to look for abominations; he is always pricking up his ears to detect discords, and snuffing up the air to find stinks. Can you insult an Englishman more than by telling him he has nothing to grumble at? Can you by any possibility inflict a greater injury upon him than by convincing him he has no occasion to grumble? Break his head, and he will forget it; pick his pocket, and he will forgive it, but deprive him of his privilege of grumbling, you more than kill him—you expatriate him. But the beauty of it is, you cannot inflict this injury on him; you cannot by all the logic ever invented, or by all the arguments that ever were uttered, convince an Englishman that he has nothing to grumble at; for if you were to do so, he would grumble at you so long as he lived for disturbing his old associations. Grumbling is a pleasure which we all enjoy more or less, but none, or but few, enjoy it in all the perfection and completeness of which it is capable. If we were to take a little more pains, we should find, that having no occasion to grumble, we should have cause to grumble at everything. But we grow insensible to a great many annoyances, and accustomed to a great many evils, and think nothing of them. What a tremendous noise there is in the city, of carts, coaches, drays, waggons, barrel-organs, fish-women, and all manner of abominations, of which they in the city take scarcely any notice at all! How badly are all matters in government and administration conducted! What very bad bread do the bakers make! What very bad meat do the butchers kill! In a word, what is there in the whole compass of existence that is good? What is there in human character that is as it should be? Are we not justified in grumbling at everything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth? In fact, gentle reader, is the world formed or governed half so well as you or I could form or govern it?—*From a newspaper.*

VULGARITY.

The very essence of vulgarity, after all, consists merely in one error—in taking manners, actions, words, opinions, on trust from others, without examining one's own feelings, or weighing the merits of the case. It is coarseness or shallowness of taste, arising from want of individual refinement, together with the confidence and presumption inspired by example and numbers. It may be defined to be a prostitution of the mind or body to ape the more or less obvious defects of others, because by so doing we shall secure the suffrages of those we associate with. To affect a gesture, an opinion, a phrase, because it is the rage with a large number of persons, or to hold it in abhorrence because another set of persons very little, if at all, better informed, cry it down to distinguish themselves from the former, is in either case equal vulgarity and absurdity. A thing is not vulgar merely because it is common. It is common to breathe, to see, to feel, to live. Nothing is vulgar that is natural, spontaneous, unavoidable. Grossness is not vulgarity, ignorance is not vulgarity, awkwardness is not vulgarity; but all these become vulgar when they are affected and shown off on the authority of others, or to fall in with the fashion or the company we keep. Caliban is coarse enough, but surely he is not vulgar. We might as well spurn the clod under our feet, and call it vulgar. Cobbett is coarse enough, but he is not vulgar. He does not belong to the herd. Nothing real, nothing original, can be vulgar; but I should think an imitator of Cobbett a vulgar man. Simplicity is not vulgarity; but the looking to imitation or affectation of any sort for distinction is. A Cockney is a vulgar character, whose imagination cannot wander beyond the suburbs of the metropolis. An aristocrat, also, who is always thinking of the High Street, Edinburgh, is vulgar. We want a name for this last character. An opinion is often vulgar that is stewed in the rank breath of the rabble; but it is not a bit purer or more refined for having passed through the well-cleansed teeth of a whole court. The inherent vulgarity lies in the having no other feeling on any subject than the crude, blind, headlong, gregarious notion acquired by sympathy with the mixed multitude, or with a fastidious minority, who are just as insensible to the real truth, and as indifferent to every thing but their own frivolous pretensions. The upper are not wiser than the lower orders, because they resolve to differ from them. The fashionable have the advantage of the unfashionable in nothing but the fashion. The true vulgar are the persons who have a horrible dread of daring to differ from their